

11 December 2014

Professor Nick Saunders AO
Acting Chief Commissioner
TEQSA
GPO Box 1672
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Professor Saunders

I write in response to your letter of 24 November 2014 seeking information in relation to allegations of misconduct by university students (including students from this university) made in the Fairfax Media last month. I am pleased to have this opportunity to report on the actions being taken by the University of Wollongong in response to this matter.

First, I would like to assure you that the University takes these allegations very seriously indeed. As recently as 5 December, the University Council considered a report reviewing the University's policies and practices in place to deal with issues relating to essay fraud and academic integrity more generally. Our Academic Senate and Academic Quality and Standards Subcommittee also discussed academic integrity issues at meetings held in early December.

As you will see from the report attached, the University has a strong policy framework to guide action in this area. Scheduled reviews of our *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* and *Code of Practice Teaching & Assessment* were commenced in September this year and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) has established two separate 'Task and Finish' groups to oversee these reviews. This review work will be informed by the findings of a recent OLT project on academic integrity, to which UOW was a partner.

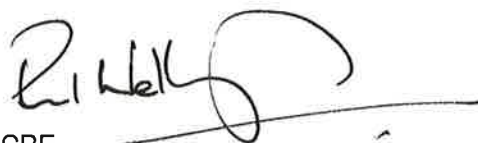
This policy framework is supported by a range of support services, learning resources and tools to assist students and staff maintain high academic integrity standards.

We are also fortunate to have among our staff several academics recognised for their work in this area including Dr Ruth Walker, who is the Chair of the Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity, and Ms Ann Rogerson, who is an active researcher on academic integrity issues in the internet age.

I refer you to the attached report for further details. Should you require clarification or additional information, please contact:

Mr Dominic Riordan
Director, Academic Quality & Standards
Tel: 02 4221 4136
dominicr@uow.edu.au

Yours sincerely



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Vice-Chancellor

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UOW response to media report

On 12 November 2014, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published an article concerning *MyMaster*, an assignment-writing service that enabled students at Australian universities to purchase assignments that would be custom-written for them for submission to their University. The University of Wollongong was one of a number of universities whose students were listed as alleged users of the service.

In response to the story, the University asked the newspaper to provide it with information about the UOW students alleged to be users of the service. This was in order to obtain evidence of student misconduct to enable the University to act on the matter. On 28 November the newspaper supplied the University with the requested information.

Records contained within the electronic files forwarded to the University were examined to determine if they contained sufficient information to identify students and/or subjects offered by the University for which purchased assignments might have been submitted as an assessment task.

The files and related analysis have been forwarded to the two relevant faculties to investigate. Where information is sufficient to identify particular students, those students under suspicion have had their results withheld for the academic session just concluded, pending further investigation.

Any action taken by the University will be in accordance with the *Procedure for Managing Alleged Academic Misconduct by a Student Undertaking Coursework* and the *Student Conducts Rules* which govern the process for investigating and acting upon any allegation of academic misconduct by a student.

The *Student Conduct Rules* and the supporting Procedure set out a range of penalties if an allegation of academic misconduct is substantiated. Submitting an assignment prepared by another person is the most serious level of academic misconduct and may result in the student being suspended, excluded, or expelled from the University, depending on the severity of the offence. Training is provided annually for staff on how to conduct effective investigation of student misconduct allegations. This is especially targeted at academic staff who are likely to be nominated as the Primary Investigation Officer within their faculty.

Academic Integrity Policy Framework

The University is committed to ensuring that students develop an understanding of academic integrity and a capacity to adhere to its principles, and that all staff understand their responsibility to prevent academic misconduct and to identify, investigate and respond to allegations of academic misconduct.

The principles of academic integrity are embodied within the University's *Student Charter* and *Student Conduct Rules*. Students are required to develop and uphold the values of academic integrity including honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. The supporting policy to the *Student Conduct Rules*, the *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy*, emphasises the importance of academic integrity, including the acknowledgement of the work of others in line with referencing standards, and the submission of their own individual and unassisted work for assessment tasks.

The *Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment* requires that subject outlines contain a strongly worded reminder to students that all work submitted for individual assessment must be their own work, reiterates the consequences of plagiarism and hyperlinks to the *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy*.

In 2012, in response to the then growing phenomenon of assessment sharing websites, a statement was added to subject outlines noting the potential for academic misconduct if such websites were accessed and that providing assessment items to such websites would be considered academic misconduct. A new form of academic misconduct, ‘facilitating academic dishonesty’, was added to the Student Conduct Rules.

Combatting Plagiarism and other forms of Academic Misconduct

Preventing academic misconduct is a priority for the University with resources, programs and assistance provided to staff and students to promote appropriate academic conduct.

In 2009, UOW hosted the 4th **Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity**. This raised awareness across the campus of the issue of Academic Integrity and a number of the presented papers were from staff or students of the University. The conference papers are available at <http://ro.uow.edu.au/apcei/>.

Academic staff are obliged to design assessment tasks that minimise the risk of plagiarism and other forms of cheating, with guidance provided in the University’s *Good Practice Assessment Guidelines*. Support for academic staff to better understand plagiarism is provided through the University’s *Continuing Professional Development Framework* for continuing and sessional academic staff.

New undergraduate students are required to complete the *StartSmart* course in their first session of study. This is a not-for-credit program designed to introduce students to information searching and management skills as well as good acknowledgement practice, the concept of plagiarism and ways to avoid plagiarism. The requirement to complete *StartSmart* is embedded in the *General Course Rules* and the *Information Literacies Integration Policy*. Ongoing support for all students is offered through the Learning Development Unit which provides a range of resources and individual assistance on request.

When submitting an item for assessment, all students are required to make an honesty declaration in which they certify that the submitted item is their own work. This requirement ensures that there can be no dispute as to the claimed authorship of the assessment item.

The University makes available the *Turnitin* text matching service to students and academic staff. Provision is made for subject coordinators to provide access to *Turnitin* to enable students to review assessment tasks before submission for assessment to evaluate whether they have referenced their work properly or used misappropriated content.

Where assignments are submitted electronically through the University’s learning platform, *Moodle*, subject coordinators may require that they be submitted through the Turnitin-Moodle module that allows students to submit drafts for self-evaluation before submitting the final version of the assignment.

Subject coordinators may submit an individual assessment item to Turnitin for an originality check if there is concern that plagiarism may have occurred in its production. If there is sufficient evidence that this occurred, then the allegation of student misconduct is managed according to the *Procedure for Managing Alleged Academic Misconduct by a Student Undertaking Coursework*.

Assessment Design Activities

Under the direction of the UOW Strategic Plan 2013-2018, the **Curriculum Transformation Project** in the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) portfolio is working to further improve assessment practice, and early identification of students at risk of academic failure through learning analytics. The University has declared 2015 to be 'the Year of Assessment and Feedback', with special focus on a broad range of actions to embed innovative assessment and feedback practice.

This work is building on a range of identified good practices in assessment and feedback and the use of analytics in student support. The University has long recognised that good practice in assessment design can reduce the risk of academic misconduct.

In 2011, the University hosted Jude Carroll, a recognised academic integrity expert from Oxford Brookes University UK, when she conducted a workshop on 'Designing out opportunities for plagiarism'. Ms Carroll's recommendations include:

- Re-writing or modifying the assessment task each academic session the subject is taught;
- Consider including 'information gathering' as a learning outcome (so that student efforts to do this constitute part of the submitted component of the assessment task;
- Replace learning outcomes which only require students to explain, list or collect information with those that demand analysis, synthesis and evaluation;
- Integrate and scaffold learning and assessment tasks so that the assessment task is developed over time (and is not amenable to the last minute provision of a 'purchased essay' arrangement.

The University's own Ann Rogerson, from the Faculty of Business, has also published on good practice in assessment design and has recommended:

- Using contemporary case studies;
- Including oral presentations either solely or in support of written work;
- Using group presentations, where the dynamics of group behaviour will often help prevent plagiarism;
- Using staged assessments that involve developmental and reflective sub-tasks that support the overall assessment and are themselves not amenable to plagiarism;
- Using the University's learning analytics tools to identify student engagement with the learning platform and use of support services; and
- Renewing and refreshing assessment items regularly.

These good practice exemplars have been discussed with the participants in the University Learning and Teaching course (ULT), a mandatory foundation course for new academic staff. They will also inform the work of the Assessment 'Task and Finish' Group which is developing new principles to guide assessment and feedback practices across the University.

Academic Integrity Activities

The University was one of six Australian universities who were project partners on the Office for Learning and Teaching Priority Project '*Academic Integrity Standards: Aligning Policy and Practice in Australian Universities 2010-2012*', with Dr Ruth Walker and Associate Professor Margaret Wallace on the project team. This project produced a range of resources (case studies on prevention, detection, investigation and outcomes; exemplary elements of policy) and ideas about how to incorporate teaching on academic integrity across the whole curriculum. The project report, released in 2013, is available at <http://www.olt.gov.au/list-projects>.

The University has maintained its involvement in related OLT projects with Assoc. Professor Wallace acting as the External Evaluator for the 2012 OLT Project '*Academic Integrity in Australia - Understanding and Changing Culture & Practice*' and as a Reference Group member on the 2012 OLT Project '*Plagiarism and related issues in assessments not involving text*'.

Planning commenced in 2014 to strengthen the University's educative approach to academic integrity with more effective management of allegations of student academic misconduct. Proposed actions include:

- Reviewing the *Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy* as part of its scheduled review to take into account electronic submission of assessment tasks and the increasingly widespread use of digital media in accessing information (this review commenced in September 2014);
- The development of an Academic Integrity Portal to provide easily accessible information about academic integrity from a wide range of stakeholders for students and staff;
- Endorsement of the systematic and ongoing teaching of academic integrity across curricula and programs;
- The production of 'fast fact sheets' with information about academic integrity and expectations for staff and students and guides to assist in managing alleged academic misconduct;
- Reviewing and producing guidelines for the use of Turnitin; and
- Reviewing data management procedures relating to student academic misconduct.

As the Curriculum Transformation Project is enacted 2015-2018, curriculum-integrated approaches to student academic skill development will be embedded into the design of each course at UOW.

The University is fortunate to have a number of academic staff members to assist in this project.

- Dr Ruth Walker is a Senior Lecturer in the Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Unit and in addition to being widely published in the area of academic integrity, is Chair of the Asia Pacific Forum of Educational Integrity (APFEI).
- Ms Ann Rogerson is Program Director for the Master of Management degree within the Faculty of Business. As noted earlier, Ms Rogerson is a recognised expert in this area, and has presented nationally and internationally on her work, involving researching the management of plagiarism.
- Dr Michael Jones and Dr Lynnaire Sheridan are both Senior Lecturers in the Faculty of Business who have recently published an article in the Journal, *Assessment & Evaluation in*

Higher Education, titled “Back translation: an emerging sophisticated cyber strategy to subvert advances in ‘digital age’ plagiarism detection and prevention”(26 August 2014).

UOW Policy References

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058648.html>

Procedure for Managing Alleged Academic Misconduct by a Student Undertaking Coursework
Student Conducts Rules <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058635.html>

Student Charter <http://www.uow.edu.au/student/charter/index.html>

Student Conduct Rules <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058723.html>

General Course Rules <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058680.html>

Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment
<http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058666.html>

Good Practice Assessment Guidelines <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058614.html>

Information Literacies Integration Policy <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW026890.html>

UOW Website References

StartSmart <http://www.uow.edu.au/student/services/fye/resources/startsmart/index.html>

Plagiarism website for Students
<http://www.uow.edu.au/student/services/ld/students/UOW021315.html>

UOW Referencing and Citing Website
<http://www.library.uow.edu.au/resourcesbytopic/UOW026621.html>

Reports & Journal Articles

‘Academic Integrity Standards: Aligning Policy and Practice in Australian Universities’ Final Report 2013, OLT website accessed 5 December 2014 <http://www.olt.gov.au/project-academic-integrity-standards-aligning-policy-and-practice-australian-universities-2010>

M Jones and L Sheridan, “Back translation: an emerging sophisticated cyber strategy to subvert advances in ‘digital age’ plagiarism detection and prevention” *Journal of Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 26 August 2014
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02602938.2014.950553#.VIEpsqO4Ykl>

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20 November 2014

Mr Chris Ingamells
TEQSA GPO Box 1672
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Mr Ingamells,

RE: Material Change Notification: Fairfax Media Reports on Contract Cheating

The University of Newcastle writes to advise TEQSA of the circumstances that we are aware of in relation to the contract cheating reported through various media outlets (notably the Sydney Morning Herald on 8 November 2014) and involving the MyMaster website and related entities.

The University of Newcastle first became aware of this particular website when students at our Sydney presence were targeted through notices placed within the campus by Yingcredible tutoring.

We contacted Yingcredible tutoring by telephone and advised them to desist advertising at our location or face legal action. This was followed up via email on 5 August 2014 (Attachment 1).

The University of Newcastle has several mechanisms in place to alert students to the seriousness of the use of contract cheating.

1. Our Academic Integrity Module is taken by all commencing students and must be completed as a requirement of the degree. The forms of academic misconduct identified in the Module are wide ranging and the submission of work by others without adequate referencing is one of those forms.
2. Our orientation programs include making students aware of particular offers of contract cheating being promoted at the time, where we know of them.
3. We write to students when a particular offer of contract cheating is being promoted, and a formal letter warning students not to use websites that offers assignment-writing services is posted permanently on the UON Sydney Blackboard site.

4. UON statements are posted in student areas to deal with advertising material that MyMaster staff affixed to UON property using permanent adhesives (Attachment 2).

The University also has robust arrangements for the review and monitoring of academic misconduct. These include our Student Misconduct Rule and our network of Student Academic Conduct Officers (SACOs) within Schools who manage processes of investigation of academic misconduct and implement sanctions at a local level. More serious sanctions for repeat offences are applied via the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

We have also recently reviewed all of our academic programs for compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework, and through that process have ensured that assessment design is diverse and allows us to assess individual student performance in a way that ensures we maintain high academic standards and have confidence in the abilities of our graduates.

An annual report on student misconduct is provided to Council through Academic Senate, and the most recent 2013 report is attached to this letter (Attachment 3). The spike in occurrences in Sydney and Singapore relate to a misunderstanding around examination requirements where students were reported for bringing disallowed material into an examination, and are not related to systematic contract cheating or other forms of academic misconduct. The 2013 report shows generally low levels of academic misconduct in relation to the large number of assessment exercises undertaken by students at the University.

Actions arising from the recent Fairfax media reports include:

1. The University has reviewed its confidential Student Misconduct Register to identify patterns in misconduct. There were 556 allegations of academic misconduct in 2013. The allegations were dismissed in 64 cases. The remaining 492 matters resulted in a range of actions being taken, from counselling and training to exclusion from a course or program. This material will be considered in UON's upcoming review of Academic Integrity Processes. Terms of Reference for this review were approved in July 2014.
2. The University has requested any relevant material from Fairfax Media and will investigate through its normal student misconduct processes should names and other material be provided.

TEQSA will be aware that the University of Newcastle (indeed any university) is not able to prevent offers of contract cheating being made to its students. We undertake a very comprehensive program of educating our students in matters relating to academic integrity, and are disappointed that a relatively small number of students still take the risk that they can use outlets such as MyMaster to prepare assessments.

To the extent that the media reports have caused wide community attention to be placed on this issue, with the potential to impact on the good standing of the sector, we are providing TEQSA with a material change notification.

The University of Newcastle is confident that it has and will deal with this matter to the best extent that we are able and in a timely manner.

I would be happy to provide further information in relation to these matters should this be required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Parfitt', with a horizontal line underneath.

Andrew Parfitt
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Encl. (3)

Louisa Connors

From: Jim Psaros
Sent: Wednesday, 19 November 2014 11:44 AM
To: Louisa Connors
Subject: Jillian's email to yingcredible tutoring

Importance: High

Louisa

As discussed

Jim

From: Sydney-GeneralEnquiry
Sent: Wednesday, 19 November 2014 10:36 AM
To: Jim Psaros
Subject: FW: Promtional materials on campus
Importance: High

From: Sydney-GeneralEnquiry
Sent: Tuesday, 5 August 2014 10:27 AM
To: 'xx'
Subject: Promtional materials on campus
Importance: High

Dear Bill, Lavinia and Benson,

We have noticed that recently there have been promotional material from your tutoring office put up in the university premise. These are not authorised by the University. It is an offence to vandalise the University's property.

Should you wish to continue to promote your services, please seek permission from the University before posting these notices.

Thank you for your attention

UoN Sydney

T: +61 2 8262 6400

F: +61 2 9267 7975

E: Sydney-Generalenquir@xx

The University of Newcastle (UoN)
Level 11, 60 Bathurst Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Australia

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**Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2013 & QS World University Rankings 2013*



Dear Student

The Faculty is well aware of the proliferation of websites which claim that they can prepare assignments for students in exchange for payment. You may have been contacted directly by one of these organisations through your student email account.

The principles of academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University and the Faculty. It is very clear that purchasing an assignment and submitting it as your own work is a serious form of academic misconduct. It is also very likely that the misconduct will be detected. Where misconduct is found to have occurred, a range of actions may be taken and or penalties imposed. Refer to Student Misconduct Rule 000935 (Part H - Penalties and Outcomes).

My strong advice for you is to not even of think of engaging with organisations offering this "service". Engaging with them may have major negative ramifications while you are a student of this university and for your subsequent professional career.

**Professor Jim Psaros
Assistant Dean (Teaching and Learning)**

2013 REPORT ON STUDENT MISCONDUCT MATTERS

PURPOSE

To provide Academic Senate with a summary of student misconduct matters during 2013.

BACKGROUND AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Student Misconduct Rule

The *Student Misconduct Rule* (document Number 000935) became effective Semester 2, 2011 (25 July 2011). Thus 2013 is the second year where all misconduct matters have been dealt with under this rule.

In the Student Misconduct Rule, broadly consistent processes were developed for academic, non-academic, and research misconduct amongst students. Procedures for dealing with student academic integrity matters across the University were brought into alignment with the rule, and record-keeping and reporting requirements for determinations of student misconduct were consolidated.

Under the rule, academic misconduct matters are dealt with by the Student Academic Conduct Officers (SACO), Pro Vice-Chancellors of Faculties and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Non-academic misconduct matters are dealt with by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Research misconduct matters are dealt with by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellors have authority under the Rule to immediately suspend students in particular circumstances, and Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors may now impose a range of penalties for academic misconduct.

The Council approved some amendments to the Student Misconduct Rule in August 2013. The main changes to the Rule were as follows:

- Introduction of the capacity for SACOs and Dean of Graduate Studies to dismiss a matter prior to investigation if there are demonstrably no grounds for a case.
- Extension of time frames for the Student Misconduct Committee to deal with referred matters.
- Clarification that all investigations of student misconduct matters must be recorded on the Student Misconduct Register in TRIM.
- Reduction of the appeals period to 10 days, except for matters where the outcome is suspension or exclusion, where the appeal period is 20 days.

The Student Misconduct Rule requires the Vice-Chancellor to report annually to the Council on student misconduct matters. The report must include summary statistics and an overview of outcomes for all student misconduct matters and appeals.

Prior to the introduction of the Student Misconduct Rule, reports to the Council presented a summary of matters dealt with by the then Student Discipline Committee (this excluded matters dealt with at Faculty level). A more comprehensive report was developed in 2012, reflecting student misconduct matters that have been dealt with at all levels of the organisation. This report will also be presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Senate separately.

All data in the report are based on registered cases in the Student Misconduct Register in TRIM as of 31 March 2013. Some minor adjustments are to be expected as further cases are resolved and/or finalised.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR NOTING

It is important to note that given the introduction of the new Student Misconduct Rule at the end of 2011 there should be some caution exercised in relation to comparisons of outcomes prior to 2012. Although the number of matters investigated in each school is reported, this information is available because the investigating officer (SACO) is school-based. It should be noted that it is difficult to make proportional comparisons between schools since students enrol in a program, rather than a "School". In some cases, as with the Newcastle Business School, the field "location" serves as a proxy for "School" but this is not true for other schools.

A key outcome for noting is that there has been no increase in matters from 2012-2013, and that the number of matters as a proportion of enrolled students has dropped since 2010.

Academic Misconduct

In 2013, 556 cases of academic misconduct were investigated by Student Academic Conduct Officers (SACO) or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Newcastle.

In 2012 it was originally reported that 487 investigations had been conducted. A number of cases were registered after the cut-off date of 1 March last year. Thus the number for 2012 has now been corrected to 529 investigations.

64 of these cases (12%) were dismissed, leaving 492 cases where it was found that academic misconduct of some form had occurred.

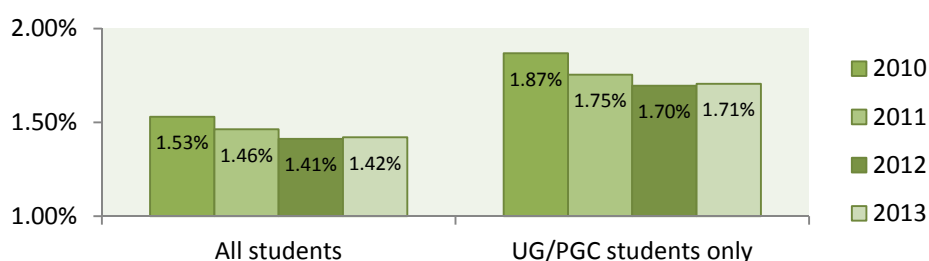
Table 1: Academic Misconduct cases investigated 2010-2013



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

The 556 cases in 2013 is an increase from previous years but, as can be seen in table 2, this increase seems to be connected to an increase in the number of enrolled students. The number of students investigated

Table 2: Academic Misconduct cases investigated 2010-2013 by percentage of all enrolled students and Undergraduate and Postgraduate Coursework students only



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014/MIS 29 May 14

for academic misconduct as a percentage of all enrolled students shows that the increase is only 0.01 percentage points.

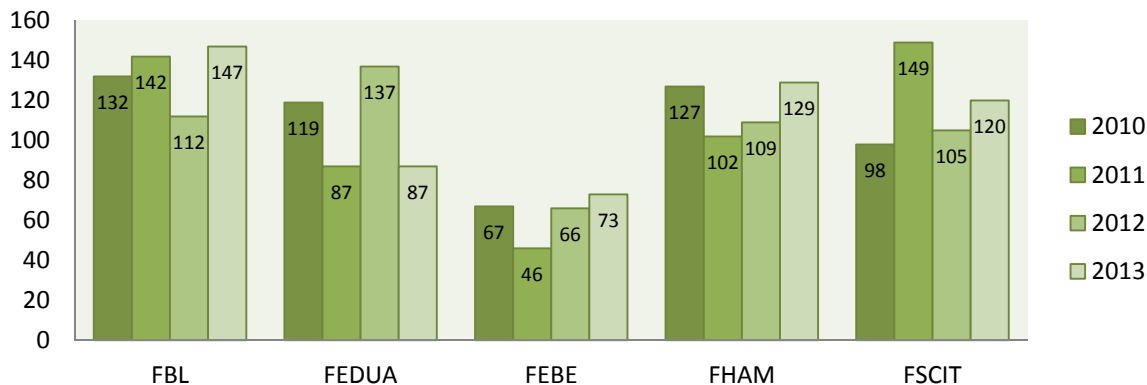
The number of cases investigated still represents a very small proportion of the total assessment

items undertaken

by students in 2013.

Table 3 shows that the number of cases in each Faculty varies from year to year. The Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) had an increase in investigations compared to 2012 and Faculty of Education and Arts (FEDUA) has had a decrease.

Table 3: Academic misconduct investigations by Faculty

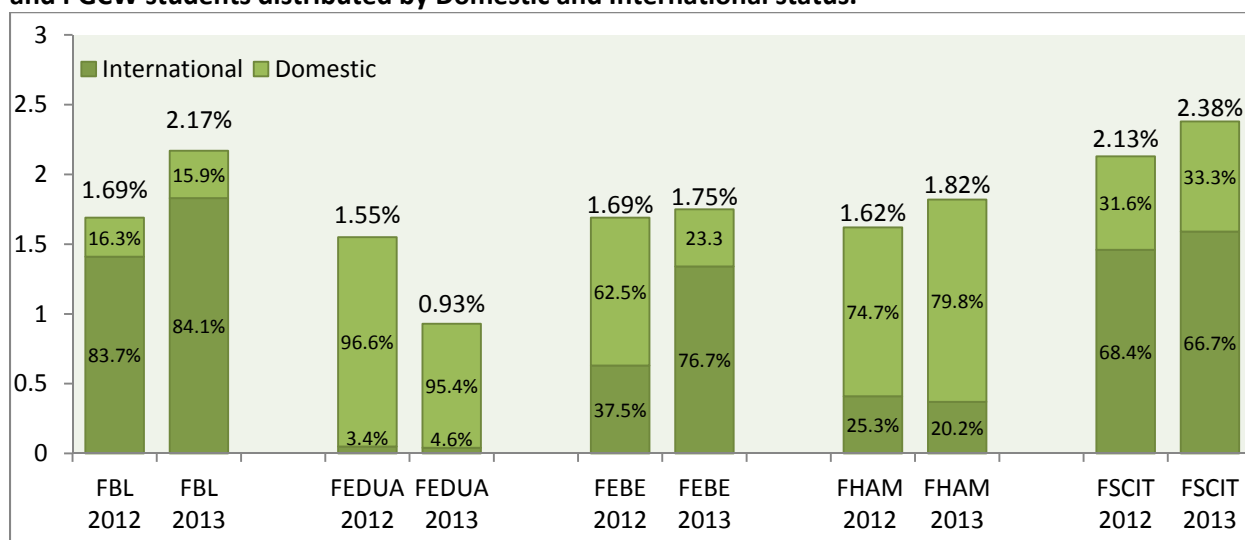


Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

In table 4 the number of students investigated for academic misconduct is shown as a percentage of enrolled Undergraduate and Postgraduate Coursework students. The table also shows the percentage of international and domestic students involved in misconduct investigations.

It is important to note that three out of five faculties had a large increase in the number of students who were investigated for academic misconduct as a proportion of faculty enrolments, while FEDUA had a decrease. Since FEDUA represents a large student cohort, the decrease in this Faculty appears to be responsible for the very minor increase in total investigations for the University of Newcastle as a whole, as seen in table 2.

Table 4: Academic misconduct investigations 2012 -2013 by Faculty as a percentage of all enrolled UG and PGCW students distributed by Domestic and International status.



Source: TRIM/SMR 3 June 2014

Table 5 shows that academic misconduct occurs in nearly all schools at the University of Newcastle, but that the largest number of cases occurs in the Newcastle Business School.

TABLE 5: Academic misconduct cases investigated per School 2012-2013

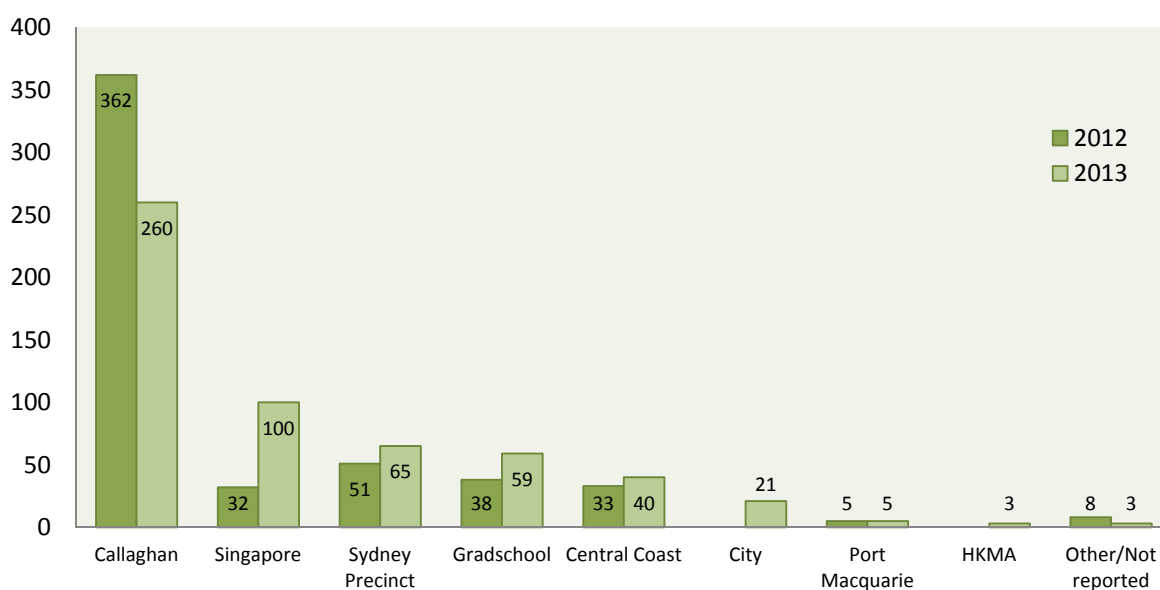
School	2012	2013
Newcastle Business School	107	134
School of Nursing & Midwifery	46	67
School of Design, Communication and IT	81	56
School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science	9	52
School of Education	54	43
School of Humanities and Social Science	83	41
School of Health Sciences	30	40
School of Environmental and Life Sciences	8	27
School of Psychology	6	27
School of Architecture and Built Environment	48	19
School of Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacy	12	13
Newcastle Law School	5	13
School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences	10	10
School of Medicine and Public Health	21	9
School of Creative arts	0	3
School of Engineering	9	2
Total	529	556

Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

There have been no academic misconduct investigations reported from the Wollotuka Institute or the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre (ELFS) during the last four years.

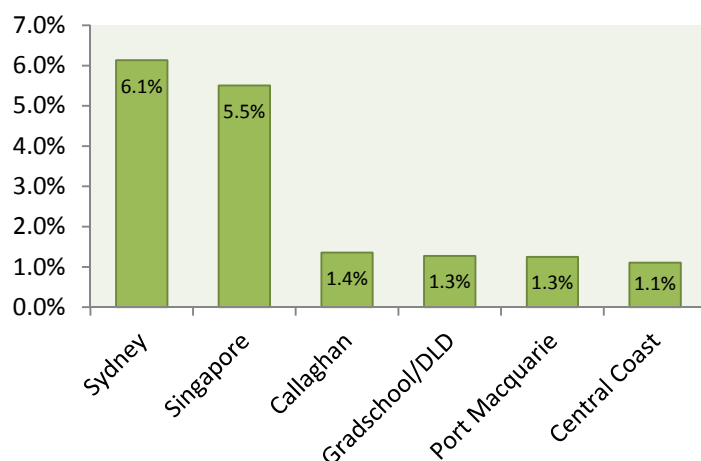
Table 6 shows that academic misconduct takes place at all locations of the University of Newcastle and mainly in line with the distribution of student load across locations. There has been a reduced number of investigations at the Callaghan Campus and an increase at the Singapore Campus. There has also been an increase in Sydney and Gradschool/Distant Learning.

Table 6: Academic misconduct investigations by campus



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

Table 7: Percentage of enrolled UG and PGCW students investigated for academic misconduct by campus in 2013

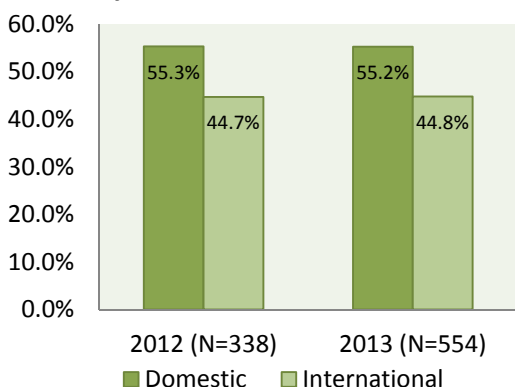


Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014/MIS 4 April 14

Table 7 shows that students enrolled in Sydney and Singapore are overrepresented when it comes to investigations of academic misconduct. In Sydney, 6.1% of enrolled undergraduate and postgraduate students have been investigated for academic misconduct. In Singapore the number is 5.5%. For all other campuses the number is fairly stable between 1.1% and 1.4%

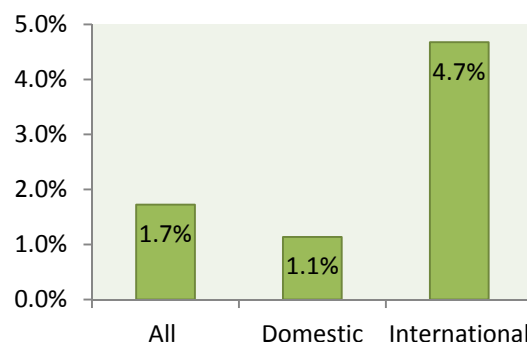
Table 8 shows that 55% of all cases of academic misconduct involved domestic students, while 45% involved international students. These figures are almost identical to those from 2012.

Table 8: Academic misconduct investigations by residency



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

Table 9: Percent of UG and PGCW students investigated for academic misconduct

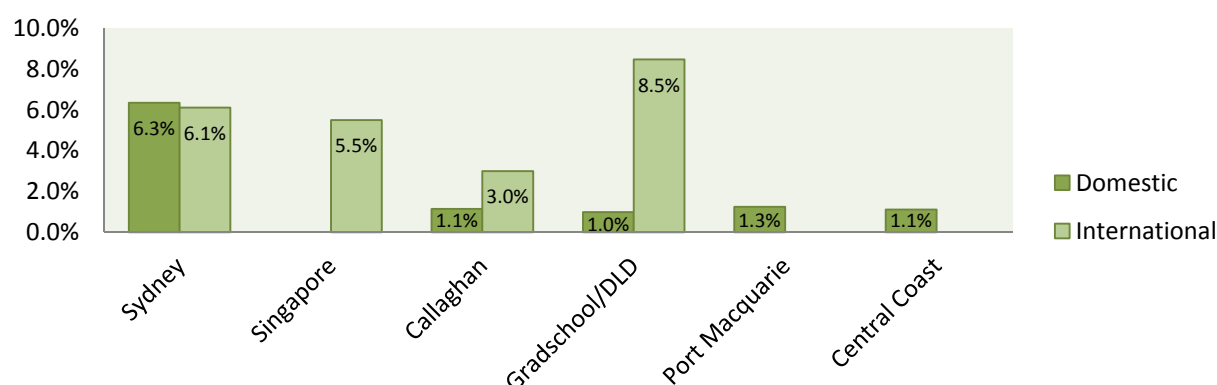


Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014/MIS 4 April 14

Table 9 shows that 1.7% of all enrolled undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Newcastle have been investigated for academic misconduct. The number is 1.1% for domestic students and 4.7% for international students. The data indicate that 1 in 20 international undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled in UoN have been investigated for academic misconduct.

In table 10 the percentage of undergraduate and postgraduate students investigated for academic misconduct have been distributed across UoN Campuses.

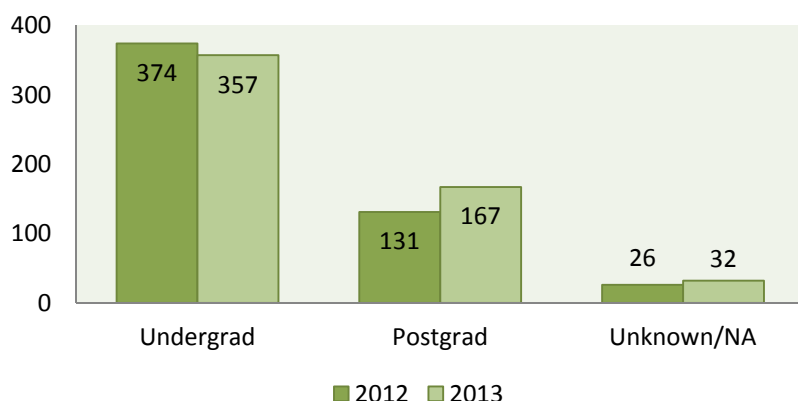
Table 10: Percent of students investigated for academic misconduct by residency and campus



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014/MIS 4 April 14

The numbers in the tables above indicate that there is a general overrepresentation of academic misconduct amongst international students, and there is a general overrepresentation of academic misconduct in Sydney and in Singapore. There is also a high percentage of International Students in Gradschool being investigated for academic misconduct, but the student cohort in question consists of 177 students in total. This is possibly too small a cohort to draw any conclusions.

Table 11: Academic misconduct investigation by level of student



Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

In 524 of the cases in 2013 the student's level of enrolment was registered in the Student Misconduct Register (SMR). In 357 of these cases (68%) the academic misconduct was committed by an undergraduate student.

It should be noted that the Newcastle Business School has investigated 107 of the cases for Postgraduate students.

TABLE 12: Academic misconduct by form of assignment

Form of assignment	2012	2013
Individual assignment	192	194
Essay	165	143
Exam	53	126
Group assignment	62	31
Lab report	5	18
Online Quiz		1
Other/Not reported	52	43
Total	529	556

Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

Most academic misconduct matters arise from individual assignments and essays, as shown in Table 12. This is probably closely connected to the results shown in Table 12, where it is shown that the most common form of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism represents more than 50% of all cases.

In table 12 it is also evident that incidents in connection with exams have increased significantly since 2012. This is probably connected to the increase in "Possession of unauthorised material" in table 13.

TABLE 12: Academic misconduct by form of misconduct

Form of assignment	2012	2013
Plagiarism	289	302
Possession of unauthorised material	43	99
Collusion	105	96
Cheating	12	22
Duplication	13	13
Fabrication/Falsification	13	4
Other	30	43
Total	529	556

Source: TRIM/SMR 31 March 2014

In table 12 it is also evident that incidents in connection with exams have increased significantly since 2012. This is probably connected to the increase in "Possession of unauthorised material" in table 13.

TABLE 14: Academic misconduct by penalty

Outcome of misconduct cases	2013
Case dismissed	64
Counselling and Training*	118
Attempt assessment again without loss of marks	41
Attempt assessment again with capped mark	133
Award appropriate mark, excluding dishonest parts	66
Complete new assessment with capped mark	28
Award no marks for assessment item	167
Grade of fail in the course (PVC)	0
Grade of fail in the course (DVC (A) or SMC)	2
Exclusion from course/program	1
Total	556
Additional Counselling given in conjunction with other penalty	165

Source: TRIM/SMR, 31 March 2014

* Most outcomes will include counselling and Training. The number indicated is where that was the only outcome.

Table 14 shows the outcomes for all academic misconduct cases in 2013. Outcomes up to “Zero marks for assignment” can be imposed by the SACO. A penalty of “Fail in course” can be imposed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty and any penalty that involves suspension or exclusion can only be imposed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). The majority of academic misconduct matters are solved at the SACO level. In 2013 there were no matters referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty. Three cases were referred to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

According to the Student Misconduct Rule, an appeal against a determination in a student misconduct matter can be lodged by the student if there is:

1. evidence of a breach of this Rule or general principles of procedural fairness; and/or
2. the suggestion that the determination was affected by a conflict of interest or personal bias; and/or
3. new information that could not reasonably have been provided prior to the hearing and it is probable that this information would have affected the determination.

An appeal on the grounds of penalty alone will not be considered.

Under the terms of the Student Misconduct Rule, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) considers appeals against decisions made by Student Academic Conduct Officers or the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

From a total of 556 cases, only 11 were appealed by the student to the DVC (A). This means that only 2% of cases were appealed in 2013.

Of the 11 appeals that were received by the DVC (A), 8 were dismissed and the allegation was upheld, while 3 appeals were upheld and the penalties in these cases were varied.

Under the terms of the Student Misconduct Rule, the Vice-Chancellor considers appeals against decisions made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or the Student Misconduct Committee.

There were no appeals in relation to three cases of academic misconduct referred to the DVC(A).

Table 15: level at which the cases within the system were resolved

Source of resolution	2012	2013
SACO	493	542
PVC	9	0
DVC (A) (appeal)	19	11
DVC (A) (referral)	6	3
VC (appeal)	1	0
Student Misconduct panel (referral)	1	0
Total	529	556

Source: TRIM/SMR, 31 March 2014

Research misconduct matters referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies under the Student Misconduct Rule

According to the Student Misconduct Rule all instances of research misconduct by RHD students should be referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Two allegations of research misconduct were referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies in 2013. One case was dismissed. And one case, where the student was found guilty, was resolved through counselling and training.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Senate:

- (i) *note the 2013 Report on student misconduct.***

**Professor Andrew Parfitt
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)**

May 2014

Prepared by	Trond Larsen, Project Officer, Office of DVC (A)	V1.0 – 10/04/14 V1.2 – 29/05/14
Sources of Data/Information	TRIM/Student Misconduct Register Management Information System (MIS) Office of the DVC (A)	
Edited by	Louisa Connors, EO Office of DVC(A)	V1.1 – 28/04/14 V1.3 – 10/06/14
Reviewed by	Andrew Parfitt, DVC(A)	V1.3 – 10/06/14
Distributed to	Teaching and Learning Committee Academic Senate University Council	V1.3 – 10/06/14
Responsibility for further action	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	

November 26th 2014

Strategies to ensure integrity of assessment and student authorship

JCU Case Study

JCU has a range of policies to ensure the integrity of assessment.

The [Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy](#) has as a core principle:

CP 5 The integrity of the University's grades and credentials is fundamental.

The policy outlines strategies to ensure the integrity of assessment. All academic staff attend induction workshops in relation to the policy requirements as outlined below.

5.3. Strategies will be employed to ensure that the student is the author (including creator) of the work submitted for assessment. Integrity of grades will be demonstrated through use of some or all of the following strategies appropriate to particular subjects and modes:

5.3.1. assessment is designed to encourage students to demonstrate their own learning, and to make connections with their own experiences,

5.3.2. some assessment is undertaken under direct supervision, and other assessment is compared with this supervised work,

5.3.3. draft versions of the work are monitored,

5.3.4. use of Safe Assignment by staff and students to detect and avoid plagiarism,

5.3.5. oral examination occurs to ensure the skills, knowledge, understanding and values of the student are consistent with those illustrated in the work submitted for assessment,

5.3.6. Colleges must provide a secure system (including via LearnJCU) for submission and return of work to safeguard against [plagiarism](#) and claims of non-receipt and non-return.

JCU has a compulsory Subject Outline format that ensures that every subject includes advice on avoiding plagiarism. The template can be found at

http://www.jcu.edu.au/learnandteach/Resources/JCU_127976.html.

Students are also required to sign a declaration of authorship when submitting assessment.

The Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Directorate offers professional learning programs for staff on assessment design, including design to ensure integrity. Performance and authentic assessment are high priorities within whole course design and the current focus of professional learning programs.

Students are directed to advice in relation to what constitutes plagiarism – for example the following site: [What is plagiarism](#).

On this site, there is clear information that the engagement of the services of an outside agencies constitutes plagiarism as noted below.

- *Quoting word for word from another's work without clear acknowledgement.*
- *Paraphrasing the work of others by altering a few words, changing their order or closely following their structure without acknowledgement.*
- *Cutting and pasting directly from the Internet.*
- *Failing to acknowledge the sources you use to produce your work.*
- *Inaccurate referencing/citation of another's work.*
- *Unauthorised collaborating and colluding with other students.*
- *Using a professional agency in the production of your work.*

Students are actively encouraged to review the [Guidelines for avoiding plagiarism](#) and also provided with a [resource](#), and workshops to support improved understanding of ways to avoid plagiarism.

Student conduct is also mediated by the following related policies:

1. [Academic Acknowledgement and Plagiarism Policy](#) where it is noted that students are required to

submit for assessment their own individual and unassisted work, except as otherwise permitted.

2. [Student Academic Misconduct Requirements](#) where penalties for plagiarism are outlined.

Further, JCU provides for plagiarism detection software: [SafeAssign](#) which is available for all non-invigilated assessment tasks within the Learning Management System.

26 November 2014

Professor Nick Saunders
Acting Chief Commissioner
TEQSA
GPO 1672
MELBOURNE VIC 3001


Dear Professor Saunders

Thank you for your letter concerning the recent media reports alleging cheating by students who purchase assignments written by others. While the number of students from UWS named in the media coverage in relation to this matter (16) is small in both absolute terms and a very small number of the overall total student population, we take these matters very seriously as they challenge the integrity of our courses and resultant qualifications that students receive on graduation.

It has not been possible for the University to determine any further specific details about the 16 students who it is claimed to have used MyMaster. We note that the company mentioned in the press releases has since closed its website and it is unlikely that any requests for information would be addressed by the company. Matters relating to the privacy of the students in question would be raised by this sort of action. However, we have issued an email to all students alerting them to the importance of academic integrity and honesty and that plagiarism and cheating of any sort will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with our well documented policies and procedures.

UWS takes a strong, holistic and rigorous approach to matters of academic integrity. Our policies clearly define the actions that constitute academic misconduct by students and describe the processes we have in place for investigating and dealing with allegations of academic misconduct. Clear penalties that apply when allegations are proven are also set out in these policies.

Students and staff are consistently and frequently reminded that we do not tolerate plagiarism or cheating of any kind. We have a strong focus on preventing this type of behaviour, with a number of initiatives in place to encourage, support and monitor ethical scholarship amongst the student population. These initiatives include:

- ensuring staff are aware of the University policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct and plagiarism;
- providing professional learning for academic staff to help in the detection of plagiarism, the development of high quality assessment practices and to ensure that there are clear procedures to deal with students who have been found to have committed academic misconduct;

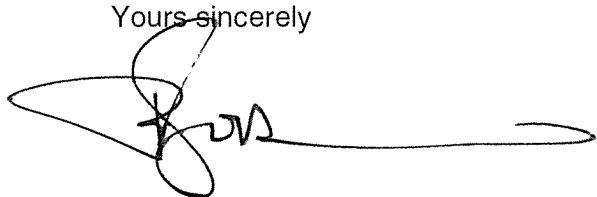
- informing students of the policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct and plagiarism at the beginning of each unit they are enrolled in, regardless of the student's stage of study;
- the use of the software Turnitin to assist in the detection of plagiarism; and
- providing instruction and additional support for students on how to avoid plagiarism and other forms of misconduct such as collusion. This includes an extensive range of study skills and English Language Skills support services.

We see the work of preventing plagiarism and cheating as a central part of designing high quality learning experiences for our students where assessment methods and processes are paid particular attention. Academic staff are supported to use planning and review processes which are aimed at ensuring that assessment practices are valid, reliable, flexible, fair and able to provide high quality information that can be used to make judgements about student progression. Some of the strategies include:

- designing assignments that have a high degree of originality (for example, taking a different perspective on an issue/problem/question/text; creating assignments that require in-depth analysis of ideas and the development of arguments rather than asking students to repeat information they might have read);
- designing assignments that require students to 'create' an object (e.g. a model, prototype) or demonstrate their capacities – for example as part of work placements or other experiential forms of learning ;
- regular revision of assessment to ensure that the same tasks are not used over successive semesters;
- the use of assignments in multiple parts – some of which have to be handed in at different times and which contribute to the final submission;
- requiring students to provide a plan or draft of their assignment before final submission; and
- requiring students to submit a sample of the resources that they used as a basis for their assignments.

The University is confident that we have well developed assessment policies and practices which should minimise the impact of the type of regrettable behaviour we have seen displayed by the very small number of UWS students on this occasion.

Yours sincerely



Professor Barney Glover
Vice-Chancellor



Professor Nick Saunders AO
Acting Chief Commissioner
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
GPO Box 1672
By email: chief.commissioner@teqsa.gov.au

28 November 2014

Dear Professor Saunders

Thank you for your letter dated November 2014 in relation to the recent media reports alleging contract cheating by university students. We take these matters very seriously and have been monitoring recent events as part of our ongoing vigilance. You have invited us to contact our TEQSA Case Manager to discuss any concerns and to offer examples of better practice to minimise the opportunity for cheating.

On 5 October 2012 we provided Ms Sarah Logan, Director of TEQSAs Regulation and Review Group, a detailed explanation of our processes to detect and prevent academic cheating by students and we will be very happy to update that report and send it to our TEQSA Case Manager.

I would like to reassure you personally that Deakin has well established policies and procedures on these matters including a Plagiarism and Collusion in Assessment Procedure linked to a Student Academic Misconduct Procedure with penalties that include possible termination of enrolment. We also provide material and advice for students that includes a *Guide to Referencing* in assessments and similar advice for Higher Degrees by Research students. Deakin makes use of *iParadigms Turnitin* plagiarism-prevention software to detect both plagiarism and collusion. Faculty Academic Progress and Discipline Committees deal with cases that are detected by a range of means and the outcome of these cases are used as deterrents for other students. This is soon to be augmented by a University-wide Integrity Framework under the auspices of our Internal Audit Unit and the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Integrity).

As with any form of fraud it is not possible to entirely prevent cheating of this sort and it requires constant vigilance as well as the maintenance of a university-wide culture that condemns and discourages such activity. As a result of this combination Deakin has avoided major contract cheating cases and isolated cases have been detected early and dealt with vigorously.

While we will provide a more detailed response to Deakin's Case Manager, Sarah Logan, I would like to observe that solutions to address this problem need to be multi-faceted and must include increasing students' awareness of the seriousness of cheating, the likelihood of detection and severity of penalties that are applied, including publishing reports of misconduct findings and penalties.

Education and re-education of both academics and students about cheating is essential and assessment methodologies that reduce the likelihood of cheating, including the use of more situated bespoke and authentic assessment tasks, are valuable.

Authentic assessment involves, wherever possible and appropriate:

- designing assessment to closely emulate the types of task the student will be required to undertake in their future professional life
- designing assessment so that the artefact produced is re-useable by students and new graduates when they are seeking employment
- encouraging students to curate what they learn in assessment tasks as evidence of learning.

This can also improve authentication: we can be more confident that students are submitting their own work if we design assessment so that it is harder to complete the task if the respondent wasn't actually involved in the class.

Finally, I would like to offer the observation that because contract cheating is sporadic but widespread, providers increasingly make use of the internet and social media outlets to promote their services both domestically and internationally. We believe, therefore, that a national and possibly an international surveillance network along with a register of providers would be very beneficial in aiding early detection and as a deterrent. Deakin has informal networks of this sort, but this approach could be put on a firmer basis if supported or at least encouraged by TEQSA.

Yours sincerely



Professor Jane den Hollander
Vice-Chancellor



1 December 2014

Professor Nick Saunders
Acting Chief Commissioner
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Dear Professor Saunders

Thank you for your letter of 24th November regarding the recent media attention given to the MyMaster 'essays for sale' website in the Fairfax press.

Curtin is examining the issues raised in the press allegations, and we can confirm that any Curtin student who is subsequently identified to have obtained a dishonest or unfair advantage through MyMaster (or any other route) will be dealt with in accordance with existing policy and procedures for the management of plagiarism.

As part of our response to this situation, the Director at Curtin's Sydney Campus has undertaken a number of actions. Students were reminded of their obligations to uphold academic integrity, and various sources of help, support and guidance were also identified. Furthermore, staff were reminded to remain vigilant in the upcoming assessment period, and they were also asked to draw on the incident as a teaching opportunity to discuss the broader issue of academic integrity with students in their respective classes.

This year at the Sydney Campus, Curtin Teaching Learning staff have provided professional learning. English Language Proficiency workshops have been held and 20 Sydney staff have engaged in the Peer Review of Teaching process. A review of assessment in courses alleged to have been involved in the recent incident will be conducted in the coming weeks.

Policy frameworks and academic governance

Curtin has rigorous policies and processes in place to protect and uphold academic integrity. The following examples are key components of this policy framework:

- The Student Charter recognises that "cheating, plagiarism and fabrication or falsifications of data are not acceptable".
- The issue of Academic Misconduct and plagiarism is specifically addressed in Statute No. 10 – Student Discipline, and in the Management of Plagiarism Policy.
- The Assessment and Student Progression Manual sets out requirements for assessment, including electronic submission, and the requirement to analyse all text based assignments using Turnitin.

Websites offering 'essays for sale' are by no means new. Their modes of operation and nature of provision continually evolve, and Curtin's policies and procedures are regularly reviewed in the light of sector experience. For example, the Management of Plagiarism Policy was last updated in May 2014. Within this policy, Curtin requires

every course to have specific designated unit/s (or appropriate alternatives) in which students are provided with information or instruction related to academic integrity, academic writing and referencing conventions.

Academic integrity is integral to sound academic governance. Breaches of academic integrity are collated and reported to Academic Board on an annual basis. Statistics relating to the incidence of plagiarism are included in the framework for quality indicators in teaching and learning. Assessment Quality Panels, a recent innovation at Curtin, include matters of academic integrity as part of their broader remit to uphold and enhance the quality of assessment and moderation. Data arising from these quality panels are collated and reported at a faculty and university level every semester.

Procedures

Like many institutions, Curtin blocks network access to websites known to be problematic. Turnitin software is available across Curtin campuses. Although websites commonly claim that their custom written essays will not match existing literature sources (and are therefore 'undetectable' by software), in reality this is not always the case. Furthermore, Curtin advises staff of the many various ways a purchased or plagiarised essay can be identified, even when potential plagiarism is not detected by Turnitin. These important aspects of academic awareness and judgement are developed in a range of ways, and they are addressed in core components contained within professional learning requirements for new staff.

More broadly, assessment practices at Curtin seek to minimise the opportunity for students to cheat. Within a degree program, a variety of assessment tasks will be employed. This means that the final decision about student progression is based on a large number of diverse tasks across the degree. These tasks include invigilated examinations, oral presentations, practical assessments and other forms of authentic tasks, all of which cannot be readily subverted by websites offering essays for sale.

We encourage students to provide comment on their educational experience throughout their program of study. Informal and formal approaches to course/unit evaluation are complemented with formal channels through which students can raise their concerns. Students are therefore able to raise issues relating to matters of academic integrity at any time.

Information and support for staff and students

Curtin has developed a website containing a central set of key resources for staff and students relating to academic integrity. This includes:

- information on the definition of plagiarism and academic misconduct;
- information about how plagiarism is managed with reference to policy;
- a staff booklet giving guidelines for dealing with plagiarism (including action flowcharts);
- student guidelines for avoiding plagiarism; and
- a self-assessment checklist for students to use prior to submitting work.

The issue of contract cheating is specifically addressed in the student guidelines (p.4), using clear, accessible language:

It is dishonest to ask, arrange for or pay someone to do work for you that you will later claim or present as your own. This applies to the use or purchase of material from websites or companies advertising academic writing services.

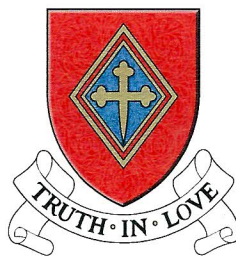
As an example of our ongoing commitment to academic integrity, we have recently updated a key flowchart poster titled 'How to manage plagiarism'. This poster gives a concise overview of policy requirements and procedures for staff. It is available online, and 5,000 printed copies are currently being distributed across Curtin's domestic and international teaching locations.

Students are supported through a range of services offered at Curtin. Academic support for students is provided within their program of study. Support is also provided through the work of The Learning Centre, which provides academic guidance and development for Curtin students via a range of free online programs and workshops designed to help students succeed in their studies. Students are also able to take advantage of the opportunity to book individual appointments with Learning Centre staff. Following the introduction of the English Language and Learning Policy (2013), Curtin now has faculty-based English Language Development Coordinators, who oversee post-entry language assessment and follow-up embedded learning support for academic literacy.

In short, Curtin remains vigilant towards the issue of academic misconduct and the promotion of academic integrity.

Professor Jill Downie
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education

Copies : Prof David Wood, Provost and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Prof Clare Pollock, Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
Michael Tomlinson, TEQSA Case Manager



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

3 December 2014

Professor Nick Saunders AO
Acting Chief Commissioner
TEQSA
GPO Box 1672
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Professor Saunders,

I am writing in response to your letter of 24 November 2014 regarding alleged cheating by university students through the purchase of assignments written by others.

Australian Catholic University takes academic honesty very seriously. We have in place a number of strategies to enable us to ensure academic honesty as far as is possible. The Academic Honesty Policy provides a framework for students to understand the importance of academic honesty to the integrity of a university and to their own work, as well as outlining different breaches of academic honesty and the penalties in place for these breaches.

The University's Learning for Life Learning and Teaching Framework underpins all learning and teaching at Australian Catholic University. Within the Framework, sits the University Assessment Policy. The Policy is designed to provide the context for assessment practices which contribute to high quality student learning and underpin the development, delivery and quality assurance of units and courses. One of the practices which we have instituted is a small assessment piece early in each semester so that the lecturer has an understanding of each student's writing ability. This gives a benchmark for later work and provides the opportunity for early guidance and intervention. Allied with this Policy is its Procedures document and the two together address the Higher Education Threshold Standard on protecting academic integrity through effective policies and measures.

The University also makes use of Turnitin for both checking and educative purposes. In this way, students are able to check their work before submission to ensure that they have referenced correctly. Many first-year classes hold special sessions on academic honesty, correct referencing and note-taking in the first weeks of Semester 1. In addition, the Academic Skills Unit, in the Directorate of the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (Students, Learning and Teaching) holds classes on academic writing and provides a drop-in service for students to ask specific questions about preparing assignments. They also provide links on their website to guides to referencing and particular referencing styles.

In view of these policies, practices and processes, I am confident that Australian Catholic University is doing all it can to provide support for students and protect the academic integrity of the University.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Greg Craven
Vice-Chancellor

Vice-Chancellor: Professor Greg Craven

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5th December 2014

Professor Nick Saunders AO
Acting Chief Commissioner
TEQSA
GPO Box 1672
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Academic)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Professor Joanne Wright
PhD ANU MLitt Aberdeen Joint Honours Kent
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E: chief.commissioner@teqsa.gov.au

Dear Professor Saunders,

The University of Queensland (UQ) is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and has a number of policies and practices detailed in its Policies and Procedures Library (PPL) to ensure that it meets the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011. Overarching these is a widely distributed Student Charter. A section within the Charter outlines the expectations that UQ has for students' academic integrity:

"We expect you to:

- maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in your work, not cheat in examinations or other forms of assessment*
- ensure that you do not plagiarise the work or ideas of other persons and that the findings of your research are interpreted and presented appropriately and based on accurate data (see 4.10.13a Intellectual Property for Staff, Students and Visitors, PPL 3.60.04a Student Integrity and Misconduct)*
- complete the compulsory academic integrity (online module) tutorial."*

Below, we shall overview the key UQ policies, procedures and practices that relate to the Minister's concerns.

UQ Policies and Procedures

PPL 3.10.02 outlines, in depth, UQ's assessment policy and provides web links to related policies including the Student Charter (PPL 3.60.01), Teaching and Learning Roles and Responsibilities (PPL 3.30.01) and Student Integrity and Misconduct (PPL 3.60.04a). This latter policy highlights that:

"All University community members share responsibility for maintaining the academic standing of the University. As such, students have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their work and ensure they appropriately acknowledge the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of others.

To facilitate the achievement of academic integrity, University staff must cultivate, with their students, a climate of mutual respect for original work and a clear understanding of standards for academic integrity."

This policy's Guidelines also direct staff and students to UQ's expectations that all students will undertake the compulsory Academic Integrity tutorial (<https://www.uq.edu.au/integrity/Intro.aspx>).

Course Profiles (PPL 3.10.03) alert students to the requirement for their completion of the Academic Integrity tutorial.

UQ “Better practices”

- Electronic submission of assignments is encouraged to provide authoritative proof of the date and time of submission and to allow for text matching including the use of plagiarism detection software.
- In the UQ Faculty of Science, courses are required to have in their assessment profiles a specific identity verified assessment task that is unambiguously completed by that student to a specific standard (e.g., in-class tests, oral presentations, field or laboratory work). Students are required to score at least 40% of the marks on those identity verified assessment tasks in order to pass the course. The Faculty believes that this initiative has greatly reduced the potential impact of students plagiarizing work.
- The DVC(A)’s Office has indicated that in 2015 assessment will be a teaching and learning priority for UQ with a particular focus on the setting of quality assessment tasks and mechanisms for the timely provision of meaningful feedback. Highly engaging, authentic assessment tasks play a part in discouraging student misconduct.

Yours sincerely,



Joanne Wright
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Distribution:
Vice-Chancellor, The University of Queensland



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05 December, 2014

Professor Nick Saunders AO
Acting Chief Commissioner
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority
GPO Box 1672
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Professor Ewan

Re: Purchase of assignments written by others

Thank you for your letter of 24 November raising the Minister's and your own concerns regarding recent media reports of the fraudulent purchasing of assignments by university students. I share your concerns over this important issue. I'd like to assure you that the University of Canberra is well advanced in dealing with this problem, and have in place measures to deal with academic dishonesty that are both preventative and forensic.

You seek reassurance on specific items from the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2011. The University has various mechanisms in place which support the standards. Specifically:

- University Education Committee annually reviews the operations and instances dealt with under the Student Conduct Rules pertaining to academic integrity (PRS 3.4).
- Academic policies relevant to academic integrity are currently under review as part of our regular cycle of policy refreshment (PRS 3.4, 3.8, 4.3).
- The University undertakes external and internal review of its courses through course advisory groups, peer review activity and moderation; this includes consideration of assessment tasks within the learning outcomes of the unit and integrity of student assessment (PRS 4.3, PCAS 5.3). Course proposals must present expected learning outcomes, and assessment tasks are considered by faculties to ensure that they are suitable to allow students to demonstrate how they meet the learning outcomes (PACS 5.1).

- A Course Quality Framework is currently being implemented. This is a component of the University's Quality and Standards Framework, which details the central quality management and enhancement processes. The Course Quality Framework details considerations of quality assurance in course review and development, including assessment practice that will be employed across all Faculties (PCAS 5.1, 5.3).
- Admission to courses and suitable expectations for prior learning/knowledge of the discipline are considered by the Admissions Committee who inform Academic Board on criteria including English language entry requirements. Pathways are designed to allow students with the requisite background to be confident of success. Prior to commencing studies, students also complete a 'Readiness' questionnaire which enables them to note skills that they required support in, for example mathematical or language support. PCAS 3.1, 3.2). This enables academics and support staff to provide targeted support and flags that particular students will need to be monitored more closely.
- Academic Skills support is provided to all students online and on campus, specifically targeting the prevention of academic misconduct (PRS 4.3).
- The University uses text-matching software (URKUND) to detect instances of potential misconduct, and where these are found, processes them through the Student Conduct Rules (PRS 4.3).
- The University also employs learner analytics to identify students "at risk", and thus with increased likelihood of academic dishonesty. In addition to this the University has recently reviewed its Early Intervention Policy, which addresses specifically these risk factors (PRS 4.3)

You also ask about examples of better practice to promote academic integrity. The University of Canberra prides itself on its proactive and holistic stance towards supporting students to enhance their academic skills and promote a culture of academic integrity amongst the staff and student body. A few of the innovative practices we currently have in place include:

- As part of the Assessment for Retention and Engagement project (ARE), academics across the University are redesigning assessment tasks, using more innovative methods of assessing students so as to ensure assessment is contemporary, feedback is useful and timely, and opportunities for cheating are minimised.
- Peer-to-peer support is used in the form of 'Study Skills Rovers' who are available throughout campus to help students in the development of their academic skills. Online material and modules provide students with the background to academic referencing, presentation, information literacy, and so on.
- Work integrated learning (WIL) is a prominent feature of University's learning and teaching environment, and leads to assessment design that is authentic and minimises the opportunity for cheating.
- Online learning techniques allow the processes behind the production of students' work to be more visible. For instance, students complete assessment as blogs or other online collaborations, allowing peer-to-peer feedback, and a record of the students' work in developing the final product is available to the lecturer.

- Embedding into an assignment a requirement for an original, non-written component, is an effective strategy for promoting academic integrity. Alongside a written submission, it is common practice to also include a parallel piece of media in the form of video, slide presentation, or portfolio contribution. The addition of an original component diminishes the opportunity to recycle previously lodged assessment pieces and completely removes any opportunity for contract cheating or use of ghost writers.

In summary, it is evident that the University of Canberra has in place a responsive approach to promoting and defending academic integrity. Students are supported through our academic integrity module and are advised of the penalties of academic misconduct. Staff are well supported by a governance framework that regularly reviews policy and constantly updates practice to match contemporary learning technologies. When breaches of academic integrity are identified the University has in place appropriate investigative procedures and penalties. I trust this response has clearly outlined how the University of Canberra is pro-actively addressing the implementation of Higher Education Standards Framework as they pertain to the serious matter of Academic Integrity. Through my office, I look forward to further liaison with TEQSA's case management team as together we strengthen the quality of assessment standards.

Yours sincerely

Professor Nick Klomp
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Professor Margaret Gardner AO
President and Vice-Chancellor

8th December, 2014

Professor Nick Saunders
Acting Chief Commissioner
TEQSA
Level 14, 530 Collins St
Melbourne VIC 3000

CONFIDENTIAL


Dear Professor Saunders,

I write in reply to your request dated 24 November seeking assurances concerning Monash University's compliance with a number of Higher Education standards relating to the assurance of academic integrity and student support.

Monash addressed its academic integrity arrangements in some detail in its provider re-registration application submitted to TEQSA in late 2012. Evidence was provided for each of the Standards referred to in the request received on November 24, 2014 (Provider Registration Standards 3.4, 3.8, 4.3 and 6.5) and Course Accreditation Standards 3.1, 3.2, 4.4, 5.1 and 5.3). The Course Accreditation Standards were addressed through each of the sampled courses.

Updated statements are provided in the attachment. Standards have been grouped under governance and policy matters and support for students. There is a final section describing some examples of innovative assessment approaches currently being employed by the University.

An investigation has commenced into the allegations of plagiarism involving Monash University students referred to in recent reports about the MyMaster website in the Sydney Morning Herald. We have contacted Fairfax Media and requested copies of the assignments. Monash takes these matters very seriously and it is possible that these may have already been detected through our internal processes.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,


Professor Margaret Gardner AO
President and Vice-Chancellor

MONASH UNIVERSITY

Response to TEQSA request for information 24 November 2014.

1. Governance and policy matters (Provider Registration Standards 3.4, 3.8 and Course Accreditation standards 3.1, 3.2, 5.1 and 5.3)

Monash provided details concerning its approaches risk assessment and management and admission regulations, policies and practices (including English proficiency requirements) as part of its re-registration submission. These arrangements have not had any significant change since the submission in late 2012.

The Monash [Ethics Statement](#) and [Student Charter](#) describe the University's expectations for ethical conduct by staff and students. During 2013, we completed cyclical policy reviews of our academic integrity policies and procedures, assessment policies and procedures and discipline regulations and processes. These changes have been progressively implemented since February 2014.

The [Academic Board regulations](#) set requirements for assessment including assessment where allegations of misconduct have been made (Part 3). Monash's [Assessment policy](#) and [procedures](#) provide the framework and requirements for setting and designing assessment. Within units of study, staff are required to:

- take steps to educate students in the skills and knowledge required to develop good academic practice;
- design student assessment tasks to minimise the likelihood of breaches of academic integrity; and
- be aware of and take measures to detect any possible breaches of academic integrity and honesty.

The University has discipline regulations governing academic misconduct ([Council regulations](#) Part 7), a specific policy on [student academic integrity](#) and maintains an academic integrity warnings register. All students are advised of the requirements of the Discipline regulations and the Student Academic Integrity policy and related procedures as part of their orientation to a course. Students are also referred to these requirements through unit guides.

When students submit assignments, they are required to certify that the assignment is their own work (whether as an individual or in group assessment). Students are also reminded of their obligations regarding the avoidance of plagiarism at this time and that it constitutes a discipline offence. The University has determined common wording to be used by all faculties in this regard.

If staff detect or become aware of breaches of academic honesty and integrity requirements, they are required to make a decision as to whether the student has intentionally or recklessly plagiarised or colluded. Monash uses text and code matching software such as Turnitin. If students are found to have unintentionally breached the University's requirements, they will be required to participate in additional academic skills development.

If students are found to have intentionally or recklessly breached the integrity and honesty standards, the matter is dealt with under the Discipline regulations. Penalties range from disallowance of the piece of work concerned to exclusion from the University. Council also has the power to revoke an award in the event that it is found to have been obtained fraudulently ([Council regulations](#), Part 8).

Faculties are required to provide confidential reports on discipline cases to the Academic Board each year and the University Discipline Panel provides annual reports to the Board on discipline appeals. Sample reports were provided as part of the re-registration submission (Attachments 3.4.3v and 4.3.3s).

Faculties are also required to establish Boards of Examiners. Academic Board regulations (Part 3) require Boards of Examiners to:

- determine the final results for each student enrolled in units taught by the faculty on the recommendation of chief examiners of unit;
- monitor and review the results in units taught by the faculty; and
- advise the dean of the faculty on any matter relating to assessment.

Monash has equivalent arrangements in place for research training and these are set out in our re-registration submission.

2. Support for students (Provider Registration Standard 6.5, Course Accreditation Standards 4.4)

Monash supports the development of student academic integrity skills through a range of approaches, including:

- discipline-specific education – providing students with statements that explain the nature of plagiarism as it applies to the discipline;
- making available University-wide resources through the Library - academic learning and skills advice for students and assistance for teaching staff to embed explicit learning skills into the curriculum; and
- providing access to tools that support good academic practice, such as [online skills development](#) and text matching software (Damocles, Turnitin).

Faculties supplement university resources and expectations are reiterated through online unit guides. An example of an additional resource is the Faculty of Business and Economics' [Q Manual](#).

Monash's approach to academic progress monitoring includes [formal procedures](#) for early intervention for students at risk and the provision of additional support for such students appropriate to their circumstances.

Monash provides a range of academic skills programs, peer support schemes and personal support services such as counselling and financial support to assist students.

Monash transition and orientation programs address academic skills development and inform students of the many support options available to them (both university and faculty based-programs). Monash Student Associations provide a range of student advocacy services.

Details can be obtained from our re-registration submission.

3. Innovative approaches to student assessment

Unit design encourages the use of a range of different types of assessment strategies rather than relying only on written forms of assessment. These approaches relate to the range knowledge, skills and attributes outlined in the unit and course learning outcomes and ensuring the appropriate mix of assessment tasks for these outcomes. Some of Monash's work in this area has been contributed to an OLT National Senior Teaching Fellowship project. Monash has many examples of innovative approaches to the design of assessment tasks that minimise the possibility of plagiarism and cheating. Some examples of assessment tasks in individual units are described below:

Chemistry (unit code CHM2922)

Using a mock court room role-playing activity where students use real data that they have measured in the lab themselves modelling a forensic chemist providing evidence to a case.

Marketing (MKF3881)

Students are required, either individually or in pairs, to create an 'Instructional Video' on a particular digital marketing tool. The video is to be made with other students as the intended audience, and is to be instructional in nature consistent with the concept that learning is enhanced if the learner has to teach others. Students are required to share their work publicly on YouTube. As such a unique and public piece of work, cheating would be extremely difficult

Marketing and Pharmacy: Collaborative production of a wiki (MKF5601 and PSC3201)

A group assessment task is set where students work together to produce a book on a wiki. The lecturer provides the book outline, (i.e. chapter headings) and students contribute to each chapter to produce a coherent whole. The use of log file data enabled the lecturer to understand how students worked collaboratively and co-operatively. This assessment practice was shared as part of the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme, an OLT National Senior Teaching Fellowship. The approach has been adopted by Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and the book produced by the 3rd year student cohort has been launched.

9th December 2014

Nick

Dear Commissioner Saunders

Re: Avondale's Response to the Acting Chief Commissioner's call for institutional responses to identified sector risks to Australia's higher education operations

Thank you for your recent letter with regard to the media reports alleging cheating by university students through the purchase of assignments. Avondale would like to assure the Hon Christopher Pyne and yourself that Avondale affirms the Minister and TEQSA's call for urgent institutional safeguards on academic integrity, noting the serious risks that these recent media reports pose to the reputation of all Australian higher education institutions and the broader threat it poses to marring the international character of Australia's higher education operations.

Avondale notes the serious risks these allegations present to the integrity of higher education delivery in Australia and intends to prioritize this matter with the urgency, and due diligence it demands.

Given the gravity of this issue, Avondale will propose to Council an amendment to Avondale's current strategic plan to include the provision for targeting academic integrity as a 2015 priority.

Further, in support of this proposed amendment, I have requested Academic Board to give due and urgent consideration to this matter and make appropriate resolutions to support this amendment and I provide below the Board's response in the stated resolutions as voted at the December 8th 2014 meeting of Academic Board.

Academic Board resolves to

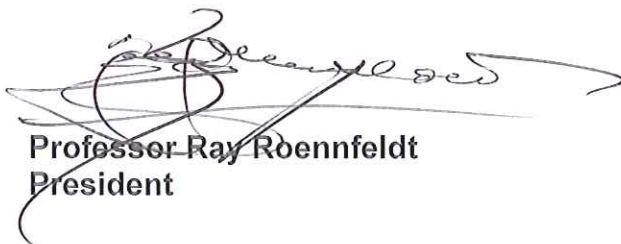
1. Review its institutional academic policies and processes to broaden the scope of its academic integrity framework so as to determine more stringent and sophisticated safeguards against variables of academic misconduct in the context of the opportunities of academic misconduct that improved technological and economic capacity provides.
2. Benchmark its current policy and practice to establish sector-informed best practice both nationally and internationally and recommend to the Senior Executive appropriate mechanisms for improving capacity within the College.

3. Develop a communication plan outlining the College's commitment to further upholding academic standards and disseminating the College's approach to dealing with academic misconduct
4. Implement further strategies to engage students in developing and sustaining a culture of scholarship.
5. Provide additional training for staff to improve the capacity for minimising academic misconduct.
6. Provide Senior Executive with a report in March 2015 on the management of academic misconduct together with detailed plans outlining how Avondale resolves to target the revision of current policies and practice and recommending necessary provisions for safeguards required to adequately address directly this relatively 'new' form of academic misconduct that has emerged, with accompanying time-frames.

To this end, Senior Executive will table a response to Academic Board's report at the College Council's April 2015 meeting, demonstrating Avondale's proposal for improved safeguards against such or likely matters of academic misconduct at Avondale. The report and response will be sent to TEQSA by May 2015.

In closing, we provide a report to TEQSA on our current policy and practice noting that the proposed resolutions by Academic Board as noted above anticipates significant and improved outcomes to ensure the integrity of the College's academic functions.

Yours faithfully and with personal regards,



Professor Ray Roennfeldt
President

AVONDALE'S REPORT on ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity is the core value of higher education. It is also a core to the underlying principles of Christian higher education. Avondale has over its long history given due consideration to matters of academic integrity as our graduate attributes reflect in the ethical-mindedness built into our graduate profile.

In practical terms, Avondale's Academic Integrity policy is reviewed regularly to ensure that a strong framework is available to both create and sustain a culture of scholarship and to minimise instances of academic misconduct. Our current policy stresses the fundamental importance of academic integrity as a core value of scholarly activity and provides the framework for dealing with instances of academic misconduct.

Dealing with plagiarism

Until June 2013, in line with the Academic Integrity Policy at the time, instances of plagiarism were dealt with by the Chair of the Faculty/School Learning and Teaching Committee when reported by the lecturer of the unit in which it was found or suspected to have occurred.

If on investigation plagiarism was established, it was the responsibility of the Chair of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee to take a penalty recommendation to the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

If major plagiarism was established the Chair of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee reported the matter to the Academic Registrar who would ensure that a notation was placed in the student's electronic record and in the hard copy file in the Academic Office. This record would include the date, the unit involved, the nature and extent of the plagiarism, and the action taken.

Record of Plagiarism between 2009-2013

In the time period of January 2009 to June 2013 the Academic Registrar was advised of **seven** cases of major plagiarism for recording. The penalty for these cases ranged from a fail mark for the assignment through to a fail grade for the unit.

Given that there were increasing concerns expressed by academic staff that students had technological access to essays and assignments and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to detect instances of academic misconduct, Academic Board called for a review of the College's Academic Integrity policy and processes.

The outcome of this review was a revised Academic Integrity Policy with tighter controls and the implementation of Turnitin.

2013 Revisions to Academic Integrity Policy

The revised Academic Integrity Policy (June 2013) was aimed at being educative and robust in minimising plagiarism.

The new process has two phases in dealing with infringements of the Academic Integrity Policy, as follows: